(b) whether the present form contains repetitive questions and also are ambiguous etc.;

(c) whether people face severe harassment in getting a five year passport extended to 10 years; and

(d) the steps Government propose to simplify the applications form and also make it easier to get the tenure of the passport extended without too much harassment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Government has made concerted efforts to design a simple passport application form without compromising essential data requirement. At present, the passport application form consists of 4 pages only compared to 9 pages prior to July 2004.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) No, Sir. Passports are now being renewed for a period of ten years except for minors in whose cases the passports are issued for five years at a time.

(d) Simplification of Passport application form is an ongoing process and the application form is redesigned from time to time keeping in view the convenience of the passport seeking public.

Denial of Russian visa to Indians

1719. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many prominent Indian Industrialists have been denied visa to Russia in spite of personal guarantee from Indian Ambassador to Russia;

(b) if so, the details in this regard with the names of Industrialists having denied visas;

(c) whether the Indian Government have lodged serious compliant as India has expressed interest in sourcing oil and gas from Russia in long term bilateral agreement; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) No, there are no such cases where, despite personal guarantee from the Ambassador of India, visas have been refused to prominent Indian Industrialists.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Peace process between India and Pakistan

†1720. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR:
SHRI SURENDRA LATH:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whethr the common statement released after talks between President of Pakistan and him in New York was an expected diplomatic ceremony;

(b) if so, whether even after agreement of both countries to enhance peace process, the mention of Kashmir issue in the General Body Meeting of UNO by the President of Pakistan would not sabotage the peace process; and

(c) if so, whether India wish to carry on the process of peace restoration with Pakistan inspite of such obstinacy on the part of President of Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) Documents specifying the outcome of talks between countries are normally issued after submmit level meetings or other important talks. The Joint Statement released after the meeting of Prime Minister and Pakistani President at New York on September 14, 2005 on the margins of the UN General Assembly Session reaffirmed the commitment of the two Governments not to allow terrorism to impede the peace process. The two leaders reviewed the progress in their relations since they had last met in New Delhi on April 18, 2005 and welcomed the progress made within the framework of the Composite Dialogue. They also expressed their commitment to ensure a peaceful settlement of all pending issues including Jammu and Kashmir to the satisfaction of both sides. Government intends to continue with the present process of confidence building and dialogue with Pakistan in an atmosphere free from terror and violence.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.